

THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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Rain Fell

GERTRUDE ANDERSON

Rhetoric II, Theme 5, 1942-1943

ALTHOUGH IT WAS VERY EARLY, THE HORSE COULD predict the type of weather there would be that day. Through the single narrow window of his cramped stall he could see the mists; he could sense the stillness and smell the threatening rain. The subdued rumble in the distance could have been thunder; but he knew that it was the low cursing of the waves that the wind had been tossing higher each hour of the night and was now throwing with heaving might against the rocks.

Even as the horse anticipated the coming, the rider appeared suddenly in the halfdoor. The creaking of the heavy stall door drowned out the customary words. The steel of the bit was cold on the horse's tongue. Down from the peg came the heavy saddle. The black horse stiffened as it settled on his back, the cinch straps slapping his sides. Through the martingale loop the cinch was drawn, and the leather strap pushed through the ring at the end of the woven cinch. Then the strap was pulled tight and knotted. The horse in protest sidestepped toward the planked wall as if to crush the man against one side of the stall. The man dodged what might have been a kick. He jerked the light rawhide trappings down and pulled the stirrups straight. Then he looped the single silver-studded leather rein over the saddle horn. Taking the reins in one hand under the black horse's chin, he led the animal down the ramp, ignoring the nervous tossing of the mane and tail which the horse exhibited.

The long damp grass seemed to clutch at their feet, and in the sheltered corners drowsed heavy-headed white and pink clover. The rider unloosed the chain from the white gate, passed through leading the horse, and closed the gate. With the reins ever tight in his left hand, he swung into the saddle. The black horse stiffened and then relaxed, and rider and horse blended in the graying light. Hitting the logging road south a bit from the gate, the horse eyed his footing. The spaces between the logs caught at his shoes.

The trees were close about horse and rider—only an occasional open place filled with wild raspberry bushes and purple fireweed; their jagged shadows fell on the road. Far back in the woods an old crow cawed mournfully. The horse peered this way and that as the trail twisted in and out and around. He seemed expectant and nervous. The rider hastily ducked as a pine bough jutted out at his head. It seemed that the horse passed under the lowest branches as though wishing to sweep the man from the saddle. The silence was a thick, heavy, oppressive quiet—one that hung as the deep stillness of deep woods hangs on every bough and dry autumn leaf.

But not all of the woods was silent. From the solid bank of undergrowth and black-barked virgin pines pranced a scary-eyed, frightened doe. She posed on the sand bank for a silent second and then plunged on spindly legs across the log road, a dash of spicy brown and fiery eyes, leaving an echoing path of hollow taps on the surface of the road.

The horse stared; and then that thing between sanity and insanity cracked. His hooves struck out into the dull woods light and beat a tattoo on the corded logs. The rider clutched madly at the horn of the saddle. His fingers caught, slipped, tore nails as his clutch was ripped from the leather. The reins were torn from his hand, and the horse, bolting into the damp air, hit the ground on four steel legs, sending the rider out into space. But the toe of one boot caught a stirrup.

The horse was in power; he ran, dragging the man on the cragged logs through the forest darkness. But the foot slipped, and the horse in a burst of wild rage stamped at the man, who groaned and tried to roll from the stabbing iron-shod hooves.

Blood colored the logs and stained the sand. The horse smelled it and sniffed the dead man, and, giving a last wild crazed leap, raced down the log road. And with a screaming snort as his shoe caught and the bones of his leg crunched he dove to the ground and lay in a sweating, heaving mass.

He had done murder; two would lie dead in that wood—man and animal. And the rain came down.

The Forsyte Saga by John Galsworthy

JAMES JACKSON

Rhetoric II, Theme 10, 1942-1943

THE THREE NOVELS OF WHICH JOHN GALSWORTHY'S *The Forsyte Saga* is composed are predominantly studies of people. The great Forsyte family was a fertile bed of conflicting emotions, incredible stupidity, and an almost insane love for security. Through the three novels Soames Forsyte, the man of property, carefully finds his way, gathering to himself all that his money can buy and holding this property with all the stubbornness of a Forsyte. Indeed, one could say that the subdued, slow-moving story is fitted to Soames. His wife, Irene, means no more to him than does his new house. Both were acquired to show the world and to express his superiority over even his family. He makes mock

attempts to appear cultured by filling a room with statues and paintings and pondering his problems in their midst. Yet secretly he sneers at Philip Boisney, a true dreamer and creator, and calls him "the Buccaneer." Nor does Soames understand his wife. Yet he loves her at first, and perhaps he regrets the later divorce. He does not change a great deal. The Soames who cautiously weighs the advantages or disadvantages of every move in the first novel is really the same Soames who sees the gradual crumbling of his family in the last one. Perhaps there is a certain triumph in his slow way, for he has survived and prospered where other, more brilliant men have fallen.

In all three novels there is a shadow of failure on the lives of the colorful members of the Forsyte family. June is clever, resolute, unafraid. Yet the reader realizes from the beginning that she will be defeated in the attainment of her desires. The author hints at it by noting the unpredictableness of her lover and the seductive charm of Irene. June is defeated and becomes an old maid. Philip Boisney also fails. He deserts June for Irene, but the latter does not love him very much. Later he dies in an accident. Even the children of Soames and Irene by later marriages are haunted by the hatred of their respective parents. Their love affair is broken up; their lives are practically ruined. Thus the books are similar in that all proclaim the strength of dullness over brilliance, of tradition over the unusual, and above all of Victorian respectability.

The books are also similar in the incidental elements of setting, time covered, and description. Galsworthy is an extremely discerning character analyst. In the three books he devotes whole pages to the mood and feelings of each person as he meets the problems in his life. Yet strangely enough he gives no clear physical description of these people. The indecision of Soames over the building of a country home is especially well described, as are his feelings of inferiority when Philip is near. The setting for each event is constructed to give the greatest effect to the action in the scene. June quarrels with Philip in a gaudily decorated theatre and clashes with charming Irene amid somber shadows in a Victorian parlor. Soames dreams of a new house on a windy hill in autumn, and Fleur meets John for the first time at a rather shabby art exhibition. The time covered in each book cannot be measured accurately, for Galsworthy wrote all three as one continuous history of a family. Therefore, one generation counts little in the whole scheme.

Lastly, in none of the books does Galsworthy condemn the characters he created. Perhaps he smiles gently to himself at their clumsy attempts to find happiness, but he is concerned only with telling a story. Thus each novel is only a story, and although upon first glance the trilogy might appear to satirize the middle class it is essentially only the fascinating, sometimes boring history of one family from its greatest success to its inevitable end.

First Date: A Social Document

DALE DICKSON

Rhetoric II, Theme 12, 1942-1943

“O H, DAYULL!”

“Huh?”

“Dale, my mother is having a birthday party for me and she told me specially to invite you to come. All the kids are coming, and I know you’ll have a snazzy time. It’s next Saturday night.” Backing me into the corner, Gwendolyn Jacobs continued, “You can bring any girl you want. Will you come?”

Gwendolyn got 100’s in algebra and history and sat next to me in class, so I said I’d come.

“Is Elaine Parks coming?” (Elaine was the prettiest girl in 9A, Beale School, Chicago.)

“Oh yes, Bill Toumey is bringing her.”

“How about Betty Bridges?” (Betty was the second prettiest girl, same class.)

“Who’re you asking?” (I was desperate by now.)

“Billy Swanson.”

“Well, thanks a lot, Gwendolyn, but I just remembered. . . .” I started to sidle away.

“Just a minute, Dale; I just had a snazzy idea. My cousin Sally, I bet, would love to come with you. She goes to Englewood and is really cute.”

I was stuck, then, so I said I guessed that would be all right. Gwendolyn, whom I liked less and less with each passing second, said that would be “snazzy,” and that she would make all the necessary arrangements, just as the “tardy bell” rang.

All through Mrs. McGinnis’ lecture on the Civil War I was tormented by a vision of a long, lanky, buck-toothed, glassy-eyed apparition. By recess time I had made up my mind to catch the next freight for the Yukon (I was going through the Jack London stage at the time), and leave the world, with all its Gwendolyns, behind. When I came back with my pockets bulging with Yukon gold, I’d show that old Elaine Parks who was the better man—me or that four-eyed Willy Toumey. When I drove up in my sixteen-cylinder Cadillac she’d be sorry. When . . .

“When a teacher is talking, Mr. Dickson, it is customary to listen, and not to gape out of the window,” Mrs. McGinnis (Evil-eye McGinnis) said sharply.

The party was for the following Saturday night, and by that afternoon I was almost resigned to my fate. Gwendolyn had "fixed everything up," and I was supposed to call up this Sally to see when she wanted to go to the party. Some of my classmates were playing football in the vacant lot, and I joined them, playing with a ferocity they had never seen in me before. What they didn't know was that I was trying my best to break a leg, to get out of going to a party.

At dinner time I ate stolidly, not tasting my food, while Mother fluttered about laying out shirt, tie, socks, and my New Brown Suit. I was particularly proud of that suit because it was the first I had had that was expected to fit at the time, and not at some indefinite future date, when I had "filled out a little." I had been allowed to get it over the figurative dead body of my mother, who had been set on a double-breasted blue serge.

I took what was probably my first voluntary bath, decided not to shave, and put on my Suit. It was by then seven o'clock, and I still had not telephoned Sally. I finally decided it could be put off no longer. The ensuing conversation I have preserved for posterity.

"Hello."

"Hello."

"Is this the residence of Miss Sally Randolph?" (I had often heard my mother say that.)

"Yes."

"Could I please speak to her?"

"This is her—she—me."

"Oh." (I was dumbfounded—she didn't speak broken English!)

"Who is this?"

"This is Dale."

"Gail who?"

"Dale Dickson."

"Oh—hello, Dale."

Being able to stand the strain no longer, I came right out with it. "I will be over at 7:30. Is that all right with you?"

"Sure, that will be fine."

"Okay—'bye."

"Goodbye."

For the first time in a week I was not unhappy. She had a nice voice and I had hopes of a girl to match. I grabbed my coat and kissed my mother goodbye. Dad was sitting in the living room, reading the paper and chuckling to himself, while Mother was all over the place—fixing my tie, making sure every ten minutes that my socks matched, and in general, acting the mother hen. As I went out the door Dad said, "Have a good time," while Mother said, "Be good, son." They often had those little disagreements.

Sally lived about five blocks away, and when I got to her door I found that I was twenty minutes early. I knew this would never do, so I strolled around the block, slowly, five or six times. At seven-thirty I was back at the door. I then got a bad case of buck fever and walked around the block again. I think I could still, after five years, draw a detailed map of that block, down to the last fireplug-and-dog.

Even after ringing the doorbell, I was sorely tempted to bolt and run, when the door opened and a pleasant-looking lady said, "Oh, hello, Gail, Sally will be down in a minute." Not feeling up to defending myself against this scurrilous attack upon my gender, I went in for "a minute."

Twenty minutes later Sally came down. I was so pleasantly surprised I just sat for a couple of seconds. ("Always stand when a lady enters the room, Dale.") She was actually pretty! Long blond hair, big blue eyes, and a blue and white party dress. She looked like a fourteen-year-old Betty Grable. I was sure my tie was on crooked and I wished that I had shaved. With a goodbye to her mother we started for Gwendolyn's party.

Once outside, we talked of school, teachers, Gwendolyn, school, and teachers. To my surprise, we agreed on everything, and by the time we got to the party we were laughing and talking as if we had been buddies all our lives.

At the door Gwendolyn, with screams of ecstasy, pounced upon us, a bowl of candy in each hand. The crowd was having a hilarious time pinning the tail on the donkey, and after a few introductions we were pinning with the best of them. As the evening wore on, some of the bolder spirits initiated a game of "Post Office." When Sally called my name, I casually strolled in to her, overturning a small table in the doing. From then on I was glad I had not broken my leg that afternoon.

About eleven they turned back the rugs and everyone danced. I say "everyone" advisedly. Sally danced and I followed her in my own inimitable fashion. This was the year of the "Big Apple," though, and some of the others actually thought I was dancing a new step. Even my inspired artistry, though, held no interest for our happy little group when a few of Post Office's infinite variations were again suggested. At one-thirty (I had told my mother that I would be home by one) Gwendolyn's mother suddenly developed a moral sense, and came Tsk-Tsking in to turn on the lights. We then, naturally, started home.

On the way home I took Sally's hand ("Getting chilly out, isn't it?"), and we talked of life, love, people, life, and love. Even walking as slowly as we could, we were in front of her house in twenty minutes. We stood in her doorway, talking about life. Finally she decided she had to go in. She turned up her face, we kissed, and she went inside.

The next week her parents moved to Detroit. I never saw her again.

Prelude

HORACE F. HARDY

Rhetoric II, Theme 14, 1942-1943

WHEN I CAME BACK INTO MY ROOM, FLETCHER WAS sitting on the bed reading one of my back numbers of *Film Fun*. "You got a date tonight?" I inquired.

He indicated the magazine. "I am acquiring my weekly quota of sex in an indirect manner," he said.

"That's the September issue, isn't it?" I said. "Look on page thirty-six if you want to see . . ."

He broke in, "I have already seen it. Very fine stuff. I will write my local congressman tonight and recommend that all available copies of this magazine be placed in the files of the Library of Congress."

"If you will get off your posterior," I said, "we will go down to Katsy's and get stoned."

"What a vulgar proposition, Blake," he said. "I propose that I read to you from one of the works of Milton or Chaucer."

I said, "Every time you say that on Saturday night, we have a devil of a time getting you home afterwards."

"I can drink you under the table any day," he said.

"Maybe we can get Sanderson to come with us."

"Sanderson would not appreciate the true value of getting stoned. That boy has no perspective."

"That same boy has the money," I reminded him.

"If Sanderson can be induced to set us up tonight," Fletcher said, "I will be only too glad to include him in our party. I have enough perspective for the two of us."

"Sanderson is notoriously close-fisted," I said. "We must conduct our campaign with great sagacity."

Fletcher got up and stretched. "I wonder if he has a date," he mused.

"Questionable. He is a . . . what is that word for 'woman-hater'?"

Fletcher opened the door and said, "All I can think of is 'megalomaniac,' and I'm sure that's not it. Come on."

We went upstairs and pounded on Sanderson's door. "Cut that out," he said. "I'm coming." We heard him slide back the bolt.

"What's the idea of keeping your door locked?" I asked.

"You see what gets in when I open it?" he said, looking at us.

"Sanderson," said Fletcher, "we want you to come to Katsy's with us."

"What you mean is, 'We want you to lend us some money,'" he said bluntly.

"Get your hat and coat on," Fletcher said.

"Hunh-unh," Sanderson said. "I like it here. It's warm, and I can save my dollars."

"Sanderson," I said, "you will never know how much our souls cry out for your company."

"I also will never know how much your wallets cry out for my lettuce," he informed us, but he was casting his eyes around for his coat.

"You are a skeptic," Fletcher said. "Besides that, I only owe you eighty-five cents. Blake only owes you a dollar and a quarter."

"I am getting a check from home tomorrow," I assured Sanderson. "I will be able to repay you post-haste. This embarrassment is merely temporary."

"You sure you're getting a check?" he asked suspiciously.

"Of course," I said. "Would I lie to you?"

"Only on occasions like this," he said, putting on his coat. "Why am I such a sucker?"

We didn't know. After getting our coats on, Fletcher and I and Sanderson went down to the bus stop and waited. The bus was slow about coming.

Fletcher said, "It's nine-thirty. We'll get there about right."

"Some night," Sanderson said, "we'll get started earlier and really get plastered."

"Two hours are enough," I said. "If you mix your drinks with care, there is no limit to the state you can reach."

"Misogynist," Fletcher said suddenly.

"What?" I said.

"Woman-hater," Fletcher said.

"Aah," I said.

"What's this about?" Sanderson wanted to know. "If you guys are starting out the evening by riddles, God only knows where it'll end up."

"A misogynist is a woman-hater," I said to him.

"All that is very fine, I know," he said, "but so what?"

"You wouldn't understand anyway," said Fletcher, "so don't worry about it."

"I'm not worrying," said Sanderson. "I am merely curious."

"Here comes the bus," I said.

"You got enough money for fare?" Sanderson wanted to know.

Fletcher said, "I have eighteen cents and Blake has twenty-two. Blake, if you will treat us to fare on the way down, I will treat us to fare on the way back."

"As you will tell us that we are all too drunk to go home without walking there, you will be . . ." I started.

"Blake!" he said reproachfully. "You know . . ."

"If you two will just get on the bus . . ." Sanderson said. We got on; I dropped a nickel and a dime into the slot, and the bus lurched forward. I was thrown into contact with a blonde, and her escort glared at me murderously.

"I beg your pardon," I said.

"Of course," she said.

"I didn't hurt you, did I?" I asked.

Sanderson said, "Blake, you idiot, come back here." Fletcher, more direct, clutched me by the coat and pulled.

"What's the idea?" I asked peevishly.

"No women," Fletcher said. "Women and gin do not mix."

"You're acting drunk already," Sanderson said.

We clung to the straps in silence after that. Eventually the bus let us all out. We stood on the sidewalk and looked around. "How much money have you got?" Fletcher asked.

"About fifteen dollars," Sanderson said.

"That should do it," I estimated.

"It's about got to," Fletcher reminded me.

We walked down the street to Katsinas' Cafe, entered, and advanced upon the bar.

Snappy Slogans Sell "Stuff"

JO ANN PERRING

Rhetoric I, Theme 12, 1942-1943

MEET MR. GULLIBLE AVERAGE, THE MAN WHO IS THE advertiser's staff of life because he literally "soaks in" all that is handed to him. He must not be too hastily condemned. After all, he does have feelings and reactions; smooth sayings, catchy rhymes, and stirring appeals leave him rarin' to go—that is, rarin' to go and give that product a try.

Suppose we look in on the Average family as they settle down after a rationed meal for a quiet evening of relaxation. Poor Mr. Average, worn out after a "hard-day at the office," picks up the magazine at hand, and from this point on goes slowly mad. Of course, Gullible doesn't jump up in a frenzy and sprint to the nearest grocery store as the radio announcer advises, but even so this quiet evening will have a marked effect upon him—wait and see!

Being very systematic about the whole thing, let us first consider those language appeals such as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, and onomatopoeia

which Gullible succumbs to. Before the magazine even has a chance, that blood-curdling conga chant, which sounds like "Dazzle Razzle Root Beer," but is really "Dad's Old Fashioned Root Beer," blares forth from the radio. This of course brings out the hep-cat in Father. (Mother thinks the whole thing is idiotic.)

After reading the repetitious phrase "No Brush, No Lather, No Rub-in" a few times in a singy-songy undertone, Mr. Average rubs his scratchy chin and decides it isn't such a bad idea. For Mrs. Average, Houbigant, cosmetic manufacturer, makes the magic promise, "One, Two, and a Glorified You." It has rhythm, we grant *that*.

Kellogg's onomatopoetic "Snap! Crackle! Pop!" is supposed to make the reader actually *hear* how fresh Rice Krispies are. Even Gullible smiles at this. But then a blustering phrase, such as "Bullet Belching Monsters by Bendix," seems to bring out the primitive man in him.

The radio interrupts us again to hiss "Whizzzzz—Best Nickel Candy There Isssss," and Mr. Average shudders. With a *coup d'oeil* he notices Pullman's good-sense rhyme "Sleep Going—to Keep Going," and Nestle's happy "Start the Day the Happy Way," but since Gullible is neither traveling nor hungry these don't impress him at the moment.

Across the page he spies, "Keep Cool with Kools," decides it is a good idea, and reaches for a Chesterfield. Power of suggestion is a wonderful thing. And there's a snappy slogan—"Singer Sewing Services Help Save—" but as Mr. Average glances at the little lady busily darning socks he quickly turns the page.

Gullible beams proudly as he sees the next page. Yes, indeed, pride is a sure-fire way to "get 'em," and in these days of "Slap the Japs" every man around the hearth likes to be appealed to. Makes him feel he's doing his part when he buys everything from Vitamin B to tweed suits—all "vital to victory," naturally. And if the recent Parker slogan says, "You have a *duty* that this new pen was born to share!" by golly, he'll do his duty. Besides, Mr. Average needs a new pen anyway.

He mumbles in his beard when the good old appeal to beauty is turned on, but nevertheless Gullible doesn't turn the page on any of the coy cuties who sparkle with Woodbury's "Camellia Clear Complexion," or Coty's "Perfume Parfait." Clever advertising! It's not what they say; it's who is saying it.

Thoroughly awakened from his drowsy stupor by America's glamor gals Mr. Average is now quite steeled for a good joke. Old Gold "hits the jackpot" with its clever series of "Something New Has Been Added" cartoons and quips. Of course, no one but a man would get such a kick out of General Tire and Rubber Company's "new substitute for rubber"—the hopeful co-ed's cupcakes! This will amuse him for fully five minutes, probably while he reminisces over his own honeymoon experience.

And now at last we come to the appeal to the stomach. After this strenuous evening of wear and tear, Gullible lives up to his name at the sight of some tempting dishes. In fact, the lure of food becomes too strong, and we must leave Mr. Average, for he has thrown down his magazine and is groping his way to the kitchen with a half-starved expression on his face while Mrs. Average mutters, "That man!"

The harm has been done, the germ has entered, and once again snappy slogans have sold "stuff," as Mr. Average goes blissfully along, "readin' and believin'!"

True Victory or Isolationism

JEWENS CRAIG

Rhetoric I, Final Examination, 1942-1943

MOST OF US ARE DOING ALL THAT IS POSSIBLE TO bring victory as soon as possible; we do not care to think of what lies ahead of us after this victory is achieved. There is little doubt that the period after the war will be the most trying in our history. We shall have our own readjustments to make, and we must also solve the problems which will arise all over the world when the last gun is silenced.

We have only to look at the years following the last war to trace our future course. Bitter soldiers will return home and attempt to rebuild their lives. Factories will close, and haggard men will roam the streets. Children will starve, and crime will flourish. Farm prices will fall to their lowest level, and the transient farm workers will increase in number. America will again become the land of two classes, the very rich and the very poor.

This picture is black, but it is no blacker than the reality of a depression. The only thing that can save us from these horrors is an intelligent planning for peace by every individual. We should be conserving in all things, and our leaders should now be making plans for something to take the place of the war industries which will disappear. The only possible solution will be a complete end of all isolationism; we must mix with the rest of the world for our own salvation. At the end of the war, other nations will need help and by supplying this help we can keep our own economic stability.

There is no proof that we will be able to go through a depression, similar to the one following the First World War, without losing any of our democratic principles and ideas. If we draw ourselves into our shell after this war, we will have lost that for which we are fighting just as surely as if we were defeated in battle.

Tragedy

JOHN A. LIBBERTON

Rhetoric II, Theme 14, 1942-1943

THE HEAT WAS TERRIFIC. THE HOT SUMMER SUN BEAT down upon us as we pushed away from the pier in my small rowboat. We were going to have a good time that afternoon, for it was the twins' birthday. The two boys were now fifteen and they were celebrating by taking a long rowboat ride on Lake Geneva.

The boys took turns rowing and enjoyed it so much that they refused my offers to lend a hand. They had never lived near a small lake and they were therefore enjoying a new experience.

It was not until we had gotten into the middle of the lake that I noticed a peculiar pink color in the western sky. I began to feel uneasy, and then sensing that something was about to happen, I jumped to the oars and began to row as fast as possible toward the shore.

After about two minutes of hard rowing I noticed that a heavy black cloud was moving rapidly over the lake. Suddenly the cloud blotted out the sun, and at that moment a blast of wind converted the lake from peaceful tranquillity to a mass of gigantic waves.

The little boat was tossed from the crest of one wave to another. I frantically tried to keep it away from the large waves while the two boys clung screaming to their seats.

Without any warning a huge wave swept down on us. We felt its terrific force, and then we found ourselves gasping for breath and bobbing among the waves.

I yelled to the twins to swim for the capsized rowboat and to hang on, but they could not reach it. With each futile stroke they were swept farther and farther away. Then a wave washed me toward the overturned boat, and with a superhuman effort I managed to reach it. My instinct of self-preservation had caused me to forget about the twins, but now I began to worry. I glanced about me, but I could see nothing of the two boys. I yelled their names above the roar of the storm, but there was no answer. . . .

All I did from then on was to cling to the boat and wait for the storm to subside. After what seemed like hours the wind ceased just as suddenly as it had come. A speedboat quickly sped away from the shore, and in a short time it was beside me. My parents and those of the twins were in the boat, and I managed to tell them what had happened.

The lake bed was dragged in an effort to find the bodies of the two boys. One body was found on the second day. The other was never discovered. I shall never forget that terrible experience.

Death at Monticello

JAMES RINGGER

Rhetoric II, Theme 14, 1942-1943

GAY, GAUDY LIGHTS FLICKER AND GLITTER OUT OVER the placid, ebony waters of Lake Shafer. From the packed dance hall drifts slow, dreamy, distance-muted music. Shouts of laughter from the carefree week-end crowds mingle with the clatter from the roller rink, the wild roar from the toboggan slide, and the jangle of machines in the amusement arcade. Wending their way through the jostling, hilarious throngs are white-aproned young vendors.

Inured by now to the beach's riotousness, Don and I paddle about luxuriously in the cool, deep water under the diving boards. We exhibit fancy dives from the low board, and wrestle playfully for a rubber ball. A well-aimed dash of cool water splatters on Bill, the lifeguard, who is dozing blissfully on a bench; Bill bolts after the culprit, catches him, and, amid spluttering protests, ducks him vigorously. Don and I, both good swimmers but poor divers, dare each other repeatedly to dive from the high board, but neither of us has the necessary nerve.

Then the clock strikes nine, and yelling a hasty "so long—don't drown yourselves," I dash for the bunkhouse, hoping to be changed and on duty by 9:15. Having changed clothes quickly, I am just elbowing my way through the dance-hall crowd when the lights suddenly flicker and go out. A tense hush hangs momentarily in the inky blackness, and then muffled voices begin to mutter queries. Continued darkness alarms the mob, and they instinctively head for the door. Just as I step out ahead of the main rush, I see a flashlight's thin, pale beam jerking rapidly towards the pier, and I hear above the increasingly loud grumblings of the crowd a faint flurry of yells from the waterfront. Followed by a few other curious ones I race towards the beach, and as the lights suddenly flare back on, I see a small group clustered about a figure lying on the dimly lighted pier.

Soon a silent, wide-eyed ring of faces circles the little group. A tanned, husky man in trunks bends methodically and mechanically back and forth over the prone figure. Three other swimmers, Don among them, are huddled nearby, whispering among themselves. In the crowd heads turn, whispers stir and speed about.—"What happened?"—"I don't know"—"Someone said he was electrocuted!"—"Electrocuted? How?"—Preceded by a boy stammering explanations, the beach manager shoves through the watchers, and, armed with rubber gloves and a wire-cutter, climbs up and cuts the wires to the diving tower. The manager's face is pale, and his multitudinous

freckles stand out fiercely; his hands shake as he climbs down and hurries to the victim's side.—“Guess a bare wire charged the tower 'n' electrocuted the poor fella”—“Oh, how horrible!”—“Will he live?”—“They been workin' on him fer twunny minutes, an' he ain't moved yet; must be dead.”—More and more people arrive; the whole beach is covered with a milling, shoving throng of people, each of whom is standing on tip-toes trying to see the victim. “Gee, ma,” a little boy says in an awed voice, “he sure looks awful white, don't he?”

Then a doctor arrives, and a wide corridor opens miraculously for him through the pressing people. All eyes are on him as he makes a brief, peremptory inspection; then he mutters softly to the small clusters of swimmers, who are now visibly shivering, either from shock or cold.—“I hear the lifeguard sent somebody to turn off the lights so's he could drag the poor fella away. Must be a brainy kid!”—The victim, clad only in sodden black trunks, lies limply face down on the wooden pier, arms and legs sprawled out. His face, blanched and chalky, still holds a pained, surprised grimace. Soaked hair strings down over the man's face, and a small scar over his right eye stands out lividly in the cruel glare of concentrated lights.

The doctor opens his little, black grip, and takes out a long hypodermic needle. After some delicate adjusting, he injects it carefully over the man's heart.—“Adrenalin!”—A sympathetic shudder ripples through the crowd, and a woman standing in the inner ring faints with a low moan.

On the roof concession silent people sip their beer and look down. A few bold souls, trying to stir up courage, talk overloudly, and a waiter, white and obviously very nervous, drops his change on the floor, where it jangles loudly and hollowly. The whole scene there below seems somehow ghastly and unreal. Red lights from the nearby Ferris wheel mingle with pools of velvety fog drifting in from the lake, casting a weird, faint red aura over everything. Scrawny beams from a score of twitching flashlights flicker and glow in the haze. A motor boat sputters up to the pier, its glaring spotlight pinned on the unconscious man.

Beads of perspiration dot the head of the man working on the victim. A wide-eyed young waiter gingerly slips a towel under the limp head, held up by a bystander. Suddenly the doctor bends over the body, then signs to the worker to cease his slow, rhythmic pushing. The doctor rises slowly, shaking his head, while the lifeguard drops a blanket over the body.—“Oh, he's dead!”—

Suddenly, brusquely, efficiently, the police arrive, and begin dispersing the crowds. Groups break up and people start for their cars; once the spell is broken, dispersion is quick. The people, depressed and wordless, hurry away.

A No to the Yes-men

MARY LOU DRUM

Rhetoric II, Theme 12, 1942-1943

A BOARD OF TRUSTEES CONCERNS ITSELF WITH MOST university affairs, especially reserving for itself the final word on the hiring and firing of instructors. And a Board of Trustees usually has a policy about how these instructors should pursue the task of enlightening their students. And a Board of Trustees is usually very unhappy when an instructor has a different policy. Then after a little while it is the instructor who is unhappy, as he looks for a new place in which to instruct.

Just what is the situation concerning the instructor who will not bow down and say "Allah!" to a Board of Trustees? By upholding his own ideals is he doing the students a favor or an injustice? My answer would be emphatically on the side of those who say he is doing students a favor.

It is his purpose to educate young people. An education has three definite aims. They are, first, to give students a broader, more comprehensive viewpoint of the world in which they live; second, to bring understanding of the ways of others, and with this understanding, tolerance; and, third, to do away with prejudice and supplant it with knowledge.

A yes-man instructor represents the exact antithesis of all these aims. How can he give students a broader viewpoint if his own extends only as far as the "Thou shalt not" sign on the council table of a Board of Trustees? What good is it to anyone if he has understanding and cannot use it to present to the students the fruits of his experience? Where are the students going to learn tolerance in a regime which does not tolerate individual differences of opinion? How can he analyze and remove prejudice when he is suffocated by it? Where is the source of knowledge if the instructor is not free to impart to his students what he knows?

Knowledge has to come from someone who already knows. The generally accepted source is the textbook. But the textbook may be colored by the personal opinions of its author, opinions which may be highly divergent from those of the instructor. And if the instructor is free to express his own opinions, the students will see varied sides of the subject and will gain a broader outlook. Thus aim number one of an education is accomplished.

Lively discussions are the very essence of progress in education. Students learn to respect the opinions of their fellow classmates and their instructor. They are willing to tolerate them for the sake of gaining new ideas. But how can discussion be stimulated if the instructor does not occasionally dissent from the majority, and encourage students to do likewise? In an interesting discussion aim number two is greatly forwarded.

Aim number three, the dispersal of prejudice and the acquisition of knowledge, is accomplished gradually in conjunction with the other two. If they are lacking, then aim number three has no chance of being realized.

Therefore, I will reply with a definite *no* to people who ask the question "Should there be yes-men on the faculty?"

Aim of a University Education As I See It

ANNE TALBOTT

Rhetoric II, Theme 1, 1942-1943

THE OTHER DAY I GOT A LETTER FROM A FRIEND AT Michigan State. In closing, he said, "Don't let your books interfere with your education." Don't let them interfere! I thought they were the education. But a second thought cleared my reasoning power. I want a liberal education, and I mean liberal.

I mean good, old, solid book learning—page and a half math problems, tough research work, heated class discussions, and grades that look well on a permanent record card and speak well for the student.

I mean good instructors, modern and tolerant. The instructor makes the subject interesting, and guides the student along his educational pathway. I want instructors that I will like now, and will still remember and thank in years to come.

I'm not slighting the social side, either. Blind dates give a student confidence, and beer parties give him a chance to "let off steam." Formal dances give him knowledge that he is master of the situation, and coke dances give him fun. It all goes into his liberal education.

Along with his learning comes a startling realization. He is not all-important at all. He is one of eight thousand other students in this university, and one of the many, many people in the world. No one is going to look after him; he has to do it himself. No bright and special star shines over his head. He can get ahead, but he has to dig. Some people would call this realization "growing-up."

His life in the university is part of his education. He learns the best manners, and has to use them constantly, so that they become part of him. He learns a respect for his elders—his house-mother, instructor, or employer. He even learns some new beer-drinking songs, which he will probably remember all his life. He learns the limitations that the lack of money can

really exert—a very painful and often repeating process. He becomes a well-rounded, liberal-minded, likeable person, giving the more important things the most notice.

That is how I see a university education, and what I want from mine. Give me a liberal education—personal style.

I Cannot Swim

CLARK BEDROSIAN

Rhetoric II, Theme 7, 1942-1943

CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN HELD OVER ME. EXPERTS have been called in. But people will not grasp the fact that I am one of those boys who constitutionally cannot learn to swim. To any critic who says that I have not been trained by the proper method, I reply: I have been trained by all methods. There is no device under heaven that has not been tried upon me. But I cannot swim.

When I know that a swimming lesson is in store, I cower behind the bathhouse door until further delay would mean a searching party. Then I try to advance to my fate with assurance. Evading my oldest brother's outstretched, clammy arms, I throw myself hysterically into the lake.

I shall not attempt to describe all that happens next. I cannot answer for the subtleties of teaching a non-teachable, non-aquatic animal to swim. I try to follow orders. But I cannot help sinking. I sink with the firmness of a submarine submerging; I sink unanimously, not head first, not feet first, but horizontally and as a whole. Then I am fished up and arranged carefully once more upon the waves and bidden yet another time to strike out. Strike out! Oh, attitudes most unorthodox and frog-like. I have learned to strike them all. Not, however, upon the surface.

Drugged by lake water, I struggle on, only mind enough left to wonder what great faith supports this brother of mine that he should spend an hour launching me and dredging for me with morose persistence. Just as the last glimmer of intelligence is about to be drowned out, my respite comes. My sister, surging by, calls, "Make him go in. He ought not overdo when he is just learning." Make him go in! With an ironic cackle I laugh terribly between chattering teeth and wade out.

Many people have condemned as artificial George Meredith's figure of speech which describes walking across the garden as "Swimming across the grassy lawn." I support Meredith—if one must swim, the best place is, in my opinion, on the lawn.

Under the Shadow

BOB PEABODY

Rhetoric I, Theme 12, 1942-1943

LIGHT DESCENDED IN A STARKLY BRILLIANT CONE FROM the huge, white-globed lamp, glaring against the sheet-shrouded table in futile search for an unnoticed speck of dirt. The light rebounded against the spotless walls and shone upon the freshly scrubbed floor. Immaculate nurses moved about in its brilliance, carrying stacks of snow-white towels and trays of gleaming instruments. The room was flooded with light, but above its arc the dark shadow stood, motionless, as if it were waiting. . . .

A door swung open, and a group of white-robed figures came slowly into the room, escorting a cot bearing the sheet-covered form of a man. They wheeled it to the table and carefully transferred the man and covered him; then they left.

Another table, spread with steel-bladed instruments, was wheeled beside the operating table. A large machine was brought into position. Towels were arranged around the figure of the man. Then everything was ready, and the nurses paused, tensely quiet.

Again the door swung open, and the surgeon, clad in speckless white, entered. Others followed, their subdued chattering stopping as they followed the doctor to the table.

The surgeon pulled back the sheet and stared for a moment at the silent figure. "A bad case," he murmured authoritatively but sadly. "He's badly off, the poor devil." The figure beneath the covers groaned as if in agreement. The shadow above the light deepened. The doctor called to his assistant, "Get him ready. We've got to operate at once."

A white-clad figure bent over the man, a mask in his hands. The groans stopped. White hands stripped back the sheet, revealing a gaping hole slashed darkly against the white skin of the abdomen.

The surgeon returned, drawing a sterilized mask over his ruddy cheeks. He picked white gloves from boiling water, drew them on carefully. He went to the table; his assistant went to the opposite side. A nurse came to stand at the head; another was at the surgeon's side, beside the small table of instruments.

For a second the surgeon stared at the wound. A boiler had exploded, and the flying fragments had struck the man in the abdomen, ripping open his belly. It was the surgeon's task to sew together the lacerated intestines, remove the steel, and clean the wound of infection before the man died of shock and the loss of blood.

The surgeon drew a breath and expelled it quickly, as if he had decided on his plan. He glanced up; the dark shadow above was menacing. Then he moved decisively.

He gestured for a knife, and, with flying hands, cut the purple tissue from the edge of the wound. He called for clamps and thread and needle, and began to sew, his assistant setting the clamps and cleaning the blood in his path. No one spoke; for words meant undue breath.

The man's breathing quickened. "He's going fast," the nurse at the head announced simply. "Oxygen and adrenalin—quick." The doctor answered her unasked question. The nurse turned, and an electric motor started, giving vent to its exertions in a soft chugging.

Blood, crimson and horrible in the bright glare of the lights, drained out onto the sheets. Dark red splotches dulled the keen brightness of the steel. The white hands of the surgeon were red. But he never noticed. He worked on absorbed; his hands seemed slow, but he worked with incredible speed.

The surgeon made the last stitch and removed the clamp. But he did not stop. He called for new clamps and began to place them carefully in the wound, pressing apart the bleeding intestines.

Finally he stopped, peering into the dark recesses he had made. He looked up and asked for the large forceps. The room was suddenly very still. The shadow seemed to draw in a little closer. The only sound was the sobbing gasps of the man.

Cautiously the emotionless fingers of the surgeon inserted the forceps into the abdomen. He worked slowly; finally he seemed to find what he was searching for. His fist convulsed. His hand emerged, then the forceps, and then the blood-covered, jagged-edged fragment of steel. The frenzied breathing of the patient choked, gagged, and stopped. The shadows deepened and advanced until they seemed very close. The machine chugged. The surgeon waited. The shadow drew closer.

And then the man was breathing again, in short, panting gasps, attempting to suck the oxygen into his lungs. A nurse turned away, biting her lip. The assistant looked up, awe in his eyes. But the surgeon had resumed his work. He applied the sulfanilamide, the destroyer of death. He drew a rubber-like sheet over the wound. He covered it with cotton. The breathing of the man eased. The machine lost momentum, died. The white light flooded the room, driving the shadow back into the recesses, where it stood, waiting. . . .

The man was wheeled from the room. Nurses gathered up the instruments, towels, compresses busily. The red-soaked sheets were taken up, and fresh, crackling ones laid down, glaring in the white light.

The surgeon removed his mask and gloves slowly. He blinked his eyes tiredly. The nurses stepped back to let him pass. He dragged himself from the room, weary beyond belief.

The War and I

DOROTHY KELAHAH

Rhetoric II, Theme 15, 1942-1943

I DIDN'T INTEND TO WRITE ABOUT WAR. I DON'T EVEN want to. But it seems there's nothing else to think about anymore. The war is everything, and there's not a single, solitary being on earth whose life isn't tied up in it.

I'm sick of it. I'm so sick of it that I could go raving, screaming mad when I think of it. And yet, who am I to feel like this? I don't even have to fight this war. I'm only one of the women at home. I'm not even a WAAC or a WAVE or a SPAR. I'm just a nineteen-year-old college girl who has been dividing her time between studies and fun, and now I'm crying like a disappointed baby because the enjoyable part has been taken away from me.

Just give me a little time to get used to the idea. I will, if I can just have a little time to think things out. I promise you, I'll develop as great a hatred as anyone else for Hitler and the Japs, and everything connected with their part of the war. I'm working up to it now. I never hated anything or anybody in my life, but I'm learning fast. When something comes smashing into the peaceful orbit of your uneventful but satisfying way of life and blows it to smithereens, hate is something you can grit your teeth on while the tears roll down your cheeks.

That's why I'm building myself a beautiful wall of solid hate. I laid the foundation when my oldest brother went off to war. Every long interval that elapses between the times we hear from him provides another stone for my wall. Each new gray hair on my mother's head cements a chink between two stones. Those new wrinkles on my father's face, and the sudden relaxation of those shoulders that never drooped before began the second layer of stones, and when my second oldest brother went into the Marines last month, that part of the wall was finished. In a few weeks, my youngest brother will leave for what he is young and foolish enough to think is a great adventure. Magically, the third layer of stones, heavy with hate, falls into place.

Today, I broke all former records in my building. I was talking to my Bill, who is scheduled to take his part in the massacre sometime in February. This fact alone is enough to make the wall top my height. But it's what he said today that swelled the proportions so much. He told me that he wasn't going to ask me to marry him, that he wasn't going to give me a ring, or his pin, or anything like that, because he doesn't feel that it's fair to tie any girl down with a promise now, when the odds are ten to one that he won't

come back. I don't want it that way, but I can't argue with him when I can see why he feels as he does.

And there goes my wall of hate, towering above the mountains. I can't control it anymore—it's out of my hands. If the day ever comes when I shall have to open a telegram that begins with the words, "We regret to inform you . . .," I'll leap this wall and fling myself at my enemies with such fury that the foundations of my wall will crumble and send the stones rolling down to crush me and my enemies with my hatred.—That, after all, would not be an unsatisfactory ending, for I am a coward, and I do not want to live in the world that this will be when the war is over.

Idiot's Delight

J. RICHARD KELLER

Rhetoric I, Final Examination, 1942-1943

DEAR MOM,

It was cold tonight—colder than it ever was before. My two-hour guard duty seemed as if it lasted throughout the entire night. The moon was shining full force and lighted up the white snow. I still can't understand why there were no planes after us—it was perfect bombing weather.

Tonight in the barracks we started talking about something we had all been thinking about, but somehow never mentioned—Just what are we fighting for? It made quite a discussion. You'd be surprised how many of the boys are fighting just because they feel they ought to defend their country. But, Mother, I'm sure there is much more to fight for than a body of land.

Mom, I think we're fighting for an idiot's delight—the most glorious idiot's delight in this world. Remember last summer? Remember those picnics in the woods, those glowing sunsets on the river, and those strolls by the edge of the water? Remember how Father would swear at the New Deal and how he would become almost speechless at the mention of Felix Frankfurter?

And then there was Spud—his long black ears dangling to the ground, his cold stub nose. I think Spud enjoyed our Sunday rides more than we did. Remember how he would run along behind my "bike"? How sad and bewildered he always looked whenever I punished him.

You said that your bridge club has been making bandages for the Red Cross during its regular meeting time. I suppose it won't be long until the dozen and one other clubs you belong to will be doing the same thing. What

will you do if the Phidian Art Club decides to camouflage tanks? Really, Mom, you've got to admit that your clubs are your idiot's delight.

Margie told me that they had given up basketball at their high school so that the boys might work every night at the defense plant. That must be tough on the kids. I'll never forget our last game with Sterling. I yelled until I was hoarse. I still think we should have won, but it was a good game. After each game we would go to Tony's for cokes. If we lost, we would listen to the "juke box"; if we won, we would sing every song that would pass the self-imposed censorship. That was my idiot's delight.

It looks as if Father is the only one who has salvaged his comfort from the war. He wrote that the *Tribune* says the administration is bungling the war effort. Somehow I think Father has chosen the greatest idiot's delight there is.

When the boys come home—and they *will* come home—all that they'll ask for are the great little things that I've called our idiot's delight. I know that's all I'll ask for. Please keep them for us.

Until then,

DICK

Village in August by T'ien Chün

MARIAN COHEN

Rhetoric II, Theme 7, 1942-1943

AS JAPANESE BOMBS RAIN HAVOC AND DESTRUCTION upon China, as thousands writhe in the agonies of bullet wounds and cholera, and as thousands more rot from starvation, Chinese culture continues to expand and bear fruit. The explanation for this phenomenon—a renaissance in the midst of death and slime—is found in the desperate need of the Chinese masses to supplant the conviction of futility permeating men's minds with a conviction of compelling purpose.

Soldier-author T'ien Chün has molded the *pai hua*—the people's vernacular, as opposed to the classical language of the intellectuals—into a rich vehicle of literary expression. With unadorned simplicity Chün has captured the blatant ribaldry of the soldier, has laid bare and unashamed the sensual warmth of man as a physical being, and has lightly touched that mysterious thing called the soul with the supple fingers of an artist.

But Chün's utter simplicity has done far more. It has clarified the basic issues of the war against the aggressor and has inculcated these issues in the mind and heart of the common man, in the minds and hearts of all of those

common men who constitute "the people." Chün sees clearly that the Japanese soldier who rapes the Chinese girl, the "fat-bellied money lenders" who suck the life blood from the farmer, the opium smugglers who peddle degradation and death are within the grasp and scope of understanding of every man, woman, and child in China; whereas abstract promises of "self-determination," "equality of opportunity," "brotherhood of man" carry no connotation. Are not the former merely concrete manifestations of the latter?

Village in August personifies the new spirit of the new China—that spirit voiced in Walt Whitman's passionate cry, "Then courage! . . . revolver! revoltress!" Revolver and revoltress—Anna and Hsiao Ming—fighting, learning, sorrowing, sharing side by side on a basis of wholesome equality. It is the new spirit of pure democracy—the unity of the worker, the soldier, the farmer, regardless of race, color, or creed; the respect for human life as a sacred trust—a respect instilled deep into the consciousness of the soldiers of the People's Revolutionary Army—a respect that makes the shooting of a common soldier, be he Japanese or Chinese puppet, a negation of principle and cause. Chün's is the China of the people, opposed on one hand by the bourgeoisie, on the other by the Japanese militarists—of the people who "must make each shot count for a hundred of our enemy's!"—those people who will drive the Japanese and their "running dogs" from their land or perish in the attempt!

Chün's psychological insight adds depth and pathos to this story of the struggle for human freedom. Though Seki Moto has been told again and again that "The soldiers of the Great Imperial Japanese Army must be loyal to our Celestial Emperor throughout their lives!" an undercurrent of imperious questioning runs beneath his cold veneer of loyalty and patriotism. Seki, a product of his environment, mutilates and kills and rapes with the blind, but always he probes the flimsy foundation of this "greater glory" that tears him from his home, his sweetheart, his very life. Chün's implications are of the utmost significance in that this doubt, this sickening, this despair is the first manifestation of a series of undermining inroads which spell ultimate collapse. But neither is Chün's picturization of the Chinese a rosy spectacle of supreme beings struggling against seemingly insurmountable obstacles for a noble and altruistic "cause." Hsiao Ming and Anna find temporary peace in each other's arms. Little Red Face dreams nostalgically of home and a comfortable pipe, and old Tsui quaveringly pleads, "Comrade Hsiao, that fine world you tell of, when will it come?" And yet, though this "fine world" is a speck on the horizon, a firefly in the night, these people fight on—hungry and weary they fight on.

Chün's China has learned with General Ch'en Chu that "when a mistake has once been made, remorse for it is useless." China has made many mistakes and it will make many more. But the rallying cry of the new China is Chün's, "We must prepare for tomorrow!"

The Young Man's Game

BOB PEABODY

Rhetoric I, Theme 15, 1942-1943

FAST BREAK BASKETBALL! A SLIM FIGURE DARTS down the sidelines, reaching for the ball that comes like a bullet to meet him. He breaks into the center, dribbling, and feints to the left of his panting opponent, who is back-pedaling furiously. Then he cuts suddenly to the right, and drives on into the basket, leaping high in the air, laying the ball gently against the backboard so that it falls through the hoop. And the crowd is on its feet again, yelling wildly again and again. . . .

. . . .

Fast break basketball—the rather silly game of trying to put an air-filled rubber ball through an iron hoop but slightly larger. But it's the fastest of sports, and it has captured the fancy of the sport-loving American till his demands to see it played have made it the best-seller of them all.

I like sports—the sweat and the labor and the beautiful simplicity of a fine team doing a difficult task skillfully. And basketball is the best of all, because it is the most demanding of all and because it returns to the players the greatest benefits for the hardest work.

Basketball is a hard game to understand and a harder one to play. Besides the fundamental necessities of being able to run, throw a ball, and dribble, a good player must have stamina, initiative, and intelligence. It takes many hours of laborious practice to make a good basketball team; it takes the personal traits of sportsmanship, courage, and determination to make a good basketball player.

This alone—the demonstration of personal prowess—would make basketball a fascinating game. But teamwork, teamwork that makes each play develop and each man perform a specified duty, is the factor that makes a basketball fan a fanatic on the subject of his sport.

Basketball appeals to the aggressive spirit in man, and the sport performs a vital aid in helping every participant curb that spirit and make it serve him instead of ruling him. Sportsmanship is a greatly overworked word, but every good basketball player must be a good sport also. Sportsmanship is really a demonstration of the person's respect for his opponent's ability, and there has never been a basketball star who has not had a healthy respect for a good foe.

These things are the factors that make every moment of a basketball game—of every basketball game—absorbing. But the final aspect of the

game as a whole is even more thrilling. There is the beautiful precision of two fine teams playing the final minutes, fast but unhurried, exerting their best, coolly, ably. There is the glory of an upset, of boys playing over their heads, of taking advantage of every break, of playing all over the floor, every minute of the game. There is the tradition of old rivals—color, and spirit, and determination.

The commercialization of major sports, both college and professional, has robbed them of the grandeur that basketball still holds. But basketball is still fresh and young, a sport for young men who have spirit and determination and a desire to do their best.

The Moon and Sixpence by W. Somerset Maugham

JACK SOLOVY

Rhetoric I, Theme 12, 1942-1943

DIRK STROEVE WAS A BUFFOON! BUT UNDER THE outer bark, which deceivingly covered his inner makeup, flowed a sap that was the life-line of his true character. He was highly emotional, sincere, generous, sympathetic, kind and lovable. Yet his appearance deceived all whom he came in contact with—he looked ridiculous to them. He was fat with short legs. He was prematurely bald. He had thick red lips which matched his fat apple-like cheeks. Nature has done many strange things, but she did the strangest when she united the outward semblance with the inner qualities of Dirk Stroeve. As W. Somerset Maugham puts it in his book *The Moon and Sixpence*, "Dirk Stroeve had the passion of Romeo in the body of Sir Toby Belch." He may best be characterized by his associations with two people, Charles Strickland and Stroeve's wife, Blanche.

Dirk Stroeve was an artist, but he was never more than third-rate. In Charles Strickland, Stroeve recognized genius. Dirk Stroeve was uncanny in recognizing the traits of a person which are buried deep in the cavity of the soul. Yes, in Strickland he recognized genius. Strickland was a man, oblivious of his surroundings, whose thoughts were deeply embedded in his mind. He had a deep passion for painting and was constantly striving to express this passion, but he didn't know how to attain the goal he was seeking, and didn't care whom he had to trample in order to accomplish his desire. To Strickland, Stroeve was a "damned fool who was forever making

an ass of himself." Strickland said this even after Stroeve had taken him to his own home, when Strickland was deathly ill. Strickland said this even after Stroeve had nursed him back to health, when he was on the verge of death. Strickland said this even after Stroeve's wife wanted to go away with Strickland, but Stroeve gave up his own home, so that his wife would not have to live in Strickland's barren attic-studio. Strickland said this even after he had driven Stroeve's wife to committing suicide, and after Stroeve had offered to take Strickland with him to his home in Holland, thinking this might change Strickland's attitude toward life. When Strickland was asked why he still made fun of Stroeve, he answered, "The absurd little man enjoys doing things for other people. That's his life." Stroeve looked ridiculous even when he tried to help someone. After his wife's death, he went to his Holland home, disappointed and heartbroken. He was in this condition not because of his own loss but because he was sorry that he couldn't do anything for a man like Strickland.

Perhaps Blanche Stroeve left Dirk because his love only excited her passion without satisfying it, and perhaps in Strickland she found what she needed. Blanche, who was a governess in the household of a prince, met Stroeve in Italy. She was seduced by the prince's son, who she thought was going to marry her. The people put her out. She was ready to commit suicide because she was going to have a baby. Stroeve found her and married her. At the time she told Stroeve she was going to leave him and live with Charles Strickland, Stroeve said, "Goodbye, my dear. I'm grateful for all the happiness you gave me in the past." As he recounted this incident to his best friend, he was told that he lost his vanity. Stroeve answered by saying, ". . . when vanity comes into love it can only be because really you love yourself best." Stroeve would not leave town after his separation from his wife, for he wanted to be near if anything happened to her. He knew that inevitably something would happen. During the period of time his wife was away Stroeve followed her every movement, trying to get a glimpse of her. He sent her notes in which he forgave her all her misgivings. He wrote that if he was a bad husband he would do everything in his power to make up to her. This was to no avail. When she was on her deathbed, after trying to commit suicide, he implored her to let him see her. She would not acquiesce. While his wife lay in the hospital, Stroeve said to a friend, in a shrieking voice, "Oh, if you knew how she's suffering! I can't bear it. I can't bear it."

There you have Dirk Stroeve—short, fat, with a round head and red cheeks. A man who possessed the love of beauty. A man whose soul was honest and sincere. An emotional, excitable, kind, pathetic man who wore gold-rimmed glasses that were always slipping down to the end of his nose. Yes! Dirk Stroeve was a buffoon.

Good-Bye to All That

DAVID HENSON

Rhetoric I, Final Examination, 1942-1943

LAST OCTOBER I THOUGHT THE FUTURE HAD NEVER looked brighter. My father had decided to retire from the bench and to join a leading Chicago law firm. At that time, I thought that the next time I walked into the Field Building at 135 South LaSalle Street it would be to take an elevator to his office on the twenty-second floor. I also thought of myself becoming a member of the firm when I graduated, for it was my place if I wanted it. Yes, last October I had a lot to look forward to.

Then the unexpected happened. Toward the end of October my father became critically ill with a rare heart disease; he died on November 1, the day before he was to have entered his law firm. I had never had such a shock; nothing else could happen which would affect me as that did. At first I thought everything was gone, and the future was so uncertain that I dreaded to face it. I didn't want to come back to school, but, knowing there was nothing else to do, I came back and made up my work, feeling rather fatalistic about everything all the while.

November brought another problem, too. That new problem was the army. I had to make up my own mind, for I had no one at home to ask for advice, and so I joined the Enlisted Reserve Corps. As a result, uncertainty has ruled me ever since. We are told nothing but conflicting rumors, and no sooner do we prepare to go into the army than we are told to stay in school. Working in the face of conflicting emotions is really difficult, and it breeds a careless attitude which is hard to overcome. Many fellows feel that it is useless to work now when they probably will be in the army in a month; they want to have all the fun they possibly can.

In the midst of all the chaos and confusion we need something to look forward to. I don't know what it will be, but I'm sure it won't be the taxes we will be paying for the rest of our lives. The idea of a saintly world-society has been advanced during this war, as it has been numberless times in the past, and it has failed every time with no more encouraging prospects for the future than the past has shown.

It seems to me that if a fellow wants something to live for and fight for and die for, it must be something personal. Some fellows have wives and children to think of; others have mothers and dads; some have businesses and jobs and hopes. Every individual, in his own personal way, has a secret hope for something in the future which will make it better than the past.

Seemingly, some fellows have very little to look forward to, in a material way, and yet they have the greatest faith in the future. Perhaps that is the only way to feel. Regardless of what we have had in the past, we can say good-bye to all that, and look forward to tomorrow with hope and faith, trusting that it will bring something to each of us which will make our lives richer and better.

What It Means to Be Poor

MARIE HINTON

Rhetoric II, Theme 4, 1942-1943

ARE YOU POOR? I AM. OH YES, I HAVE TWO GOOD hands, two good feet, and two good eyes; adequate food, shelter, and clothing; and I have freedom, which makes me rich, or so the romanticists would have me believe. They also would have me believe that I can be just as happy, perhaps even happier without money as I can with it. I'm going to show you some of the things it means not to have money.

First of all, it means that one member of the family, probably either the father or mother, has control of what money there is, and each time you want some, you have to ask him or her for it. The first two or three times aren't so bad, but gradually you begin doing without things rather than ask for money. It is the hardest, most embarrassing thing that I can think of.

It means that the first thought you think when someone mentions getting something or doing something is, "How much will it cost?" It means trying desperately to get out of going for a coke with friends, having to refuse their well-meant offers of a loan or of "This one is on me," and then making yourself as unnoticed as possible while they have one, hoping that expression in your eyes doesn't look like longing for one, because you *didn't* want one!

It means buying a stamp for a letter each time you mail one, instead of having a sheaf of stamps in your desk drawer, because you hate to put down the necessary lump sum of money at one time. It means not taking pictures with the camera you got for graduation because it costs thirty-seven cents for a roll of film and twenty-five cents to get it developed, and that adds up to sixty-two cents—almost a dollar! It means getting a ten-cent bottle of nail polish, and not using it very often, because every time you do, there's that much more gone and then you won't have any. It means getting a good magazine about twice a year instead of having one sent to you every month. It means not smoking, because a pack of cigarettes costs

eighteen cents, and a pack doesn't last long. It means dreading Christmas and your friends' birthdays because you have to look for "something under a dollar, please." It means not having a penny bank, because you don't have any spare pennies. It means putting a nickel in the church collection sometimes, and sometimes not. It means getting the \$3.98 dress even though the clerk and your common sense tell you that the \$10 one will wear longer and really be a saving in the long run. It means not having a good sun tan like the other girls at the end of summer because you are in the sun only occasionally, and when you are, you don't have sun tan lotion. It means waiting for the change from an occasional soda check instead of leaving it for the waitress. It means—oh, it means *so* many more little things like these. Things that you *have* to do, and yet make you feel like a cheapskate. Things that undermine your sense of security. Things that ruin your poise. Things that make you feel like telling the "The best things in life are free" people to go jump in the lake!

How Blissful Was My Ignorance

ROSEMARY WHITE

Rhetoric I, Theme 14, 1942-1943

I WAS APPROACHING THE TENDER AGE OF TWELVE, AND was still under the influence of the "Horatio Alger" series, when I first decided to become a great journalist. Like all unsuspecting youth, I considered myself the possessor of exceptional ability, which the world, to its own disadvantage, chose to ignore completely. To me, it seemed a shame that my genius should be wasted on such things as mathematics and science, and I spent the great part of my eighth year in school composing short literary gems.

One of these earliest stories, "Give Me a Ring," was, to my young mind, the criterion of American humor. Never dreaming that it would be rejected, I sent it to *Colliers* magazine and waited confidently for a reply. Within the next two weeks, my manuscript was returned with this note attached: "We appreciate your interest in our publication; however, since *Colliers* magazine is nationally read, we seldom print articles or stories written by unknown authors. We hope you will understand that this does not, in any way, reflect on the merit of your work."

Disgusted with the stupidity of the firm to which I had so generously offered my services, and dissatisfied with my next two attempts at humorous writing, I decided to change my style completely. As a result, there

flowed from my pen such masterpieces as "The Corner of Death" and "For Tomorrow We May Die," both short novels (though that may be a slight misuse of the term). I considered the latter the better of the two. Its opening paragraph went something like this: "The gory fingers of the Underworld reach out to snare unsuspecting victims, pulling them down, down, down, into a sea of iniquity." My favorite words in those days were *gory* and *iniquity*, and I used them every time I could conveniently fit them in. I also liked to write about some horrible, unseen powers which descended menacingly on all of mankind.

Making use of this more dramatic style, I wrote a short masterwork which I called "The Stranger." Though it pains me almost beyond endurance, I present it here in its original form.

THE STRANGER

The man stumbles forward as if his last ounce of energy has suddenly been removed by some unseen force. There is no light—only darkness. In dread anticipation, the moon and stars have hidden themselves away as, with head hung low, this miserable creature struggles through the blackness. An eternal conflict is raging within the inner man. Can it be the perpetual quest for gladness of heart, or does it rise from the attempt to find peace in the midst of chaos and confusion? Calm eyes of the night are turned toward the bent figure as he struggles onward. His frantic cries, echoing in the stillness, fall on unhearing ears. "Oh, you fools, you stupid fools!" Suddenly the man sees a point of light in the distance. It is warm, like the hand of God outstretched to a little child. The man pushes himself toward the welcome beam. For hours, it seems, he pursues it, moving forward, yet never coming nearer. He lifts his arms to the silent heavens, again screaming frantically. At last, the stranger falls upon the ground, exhausted, and covering his face with his hands, sobs uncontrollably until his soul is torn apart with the anguish of his heart. After a time, he raises his tired body and gazes searchingly into the void behind him. The road on which he has traveled is gone. The growth of iniquity has covered the dust upon which his aching feet have trod. There is no choice but to go on, ever searching, ever hoping. As he turns again to follow that dim light, he sees that it is gone. The road that had stretched before him is barred. Gory, distorted figures are strewn along the way he would travel. All about him are the unsightly evidences of greed and sin. He falls back in horror, and the wild wind screams savagely above his head. The ghost-like trees look on in silence as the stranger is borne away by the foolishness of his kind and the unseen powers of destruction.

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I will never know what I meant when I wrote this, or what I thought to accomplish by it. When I proudly presented it to my English teacher for approval she read it slowly and, when she had finished, stared at me for a long moment. Then she shook her head sadly, and walked out of the room.

A Bit of Reverie

DALE TEEL

Rhetoric II, Theme 7, 1942-1943

MEMORIES OF MY MOST ENJOYABLE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES always lead me back to the visits which my younger brother and I enjoyed with our only intimate cousins. They were boys only slightly older than ourselves, and accordingly their interests were more or less parallel to ours.

My earliest recollection comes from a time when I was probably not more than four years old. I had stayed overnight with my cousins during my first week of grade school. The only thing I remember is that on the way to school with them the following morning I dropped my lunch into some cow dung while I was straddling a fence. Memories of scenes thereafter rush overwhelmingly and perplexingly to my mind, in such a manner that it is very difficult for me to isolate any one experience definitely.

We lived in the country some five miles apart, and each pair of us brothers had a pony. In those days we lived unrestrainedly in our fancies—in a world limited not at all by fact and logic, but colored and perfected by that wonderful phenomenon called imagination. In that world nothing real was real to us—and to this day I wonder which world is preferable, the child's or the man's. Certainly we were content: there was never a physical situation which could not be construed to be something more desirable.

For instance, if the four of us, seeing only the realistic side of our lives, had considered having to go far into the "bottom land" to cut "sprouts," undoubtedly we would have had a miserable, wretched time of it. But to us no task was work; all was adventure. On such a day we would rise at dawn and, after having done the morning chores, mount our ponies, riding double, and proceed to the "bottom." We always wore gun belts with cap pistols. We worked alternately in pairs; invariably the younger cousin and I were together. While one pair of us chopped, piled, and burned sprouts, the other pair were braving the wilds of a fancied jungle, shooting lions, or capturing outlaws. At the end of a day's labor (which, by the way, was not entirely insignificant), we would ride home again, and sleep, exhausted, either four-in-a-bed or sprawled over the entire living-room rug.

On other days, when there was no work to be done, we often went to the creek to fish, or played softball or a game of our own called "suck-egg-donkey." The outlandish name is of unknown origin, and the game itself is perhaps as unusual as the name. It was played in teams; one of us would mount his teammate's shoulders and try to unseat his opponent, who was

perched on the shoulders of his comrade. Rough and tumble it was, yet the vigorous, wholesome competition was extremely delightful.

In the whole length of our experiences together, I can remember absolutely no time when there was enmity or bitterness between us; it should have been so. Our quixotic adventures, although fantastically including hatred and lust for blood, would allow no actual strife.

Today we have a very different reunion when, by chance, the four of us can get together. The cousins have "girl complex"; I seem to have developed a curious habit of looking on the serious side of things; and my brother is yet in that stage of adolescence which does not harmonize, somehow, with mine or that of the cousins. There is little more entertaining that we can do than to recall the "good old days."

Rhet as Writ

Some believe we are descendants of the ape, whereas others believe that we are here through spontaneous combustion.

. . . .

She was living in monandry and not bigotry.

. . . .

It was proven that during the last war the population dropped off heavily because of the lack of fathers for the unborn babe.

. . . .

Any person who would deliberately kill another is undoubtedly lacking in character. Such an act shows a sign of weakness, of being ill-bred, uncouth and selfish.

. . . .

When I first came to the University I didn't think I was going to like it as well as I thought I would.

. . . .

Fraternities believe that if fraternity men go out for extra-circular activities, they will be more well-rounded.

. . . .

Her dinner guests took the dessert for granite.

